

Idaho Sheep Industry Suffers a \$4.73 Million Death and Theft Loss in 1997

Idaho sheep producers lost an estimated 43,000 head of sheep and lambs from all causes, valued at \$4.73 million, in 1997. This compares with losses totaling 45,000 head with a value of \$4.62 million in 1996.

Predator losses, at 36.3 percent, accounted for the largest share of losses. Coyotes did the most damage, at 10,800 head of sheep and lambs, and continued to be the number one cause of death in both lambs and mature sheep. Losses from coyotes alone were valued at \$1.19 million. Cougars claimed 1,400 head of sheep and lambs valued at \$154,000; bears were responsible for the deaths of 1,100 head, valued at \$121,000; dogs caused 600

deaths, valued at \$66,000; and fox killed 400 head, valued at \$44,000. Losses from other and unknown predators, including bobcats, eagles and wolves, accounted for an additional 1,300 head of sheep and lambs.

After coyote losses, the next leading cause of death in sheep and lambs was disease, at 7,100 head or 16.5 percent of all losses. Lambing complications killed 6,000 head; weather claimed 5,400; 1,900 were lost to poisoning; 1,400 died of old age; and 200 were lost to theft. Other causes such as accidents, fire, starvation and dehydration caused an additional 2,400 sheep and lamb deaths during 1997.

Sheep and Lamb Losses: by Cause, Idaho, 1995-97

Cause of Death	Sheep						Lambs ^{1/}						Value of All Sheep and Lambs ^{3/4/5/}		
	Head			Percent of Total Loss ^{2/}			Head			Percent of Total Loss ^{2/}					
	1995	1996	1997	1995	1996	1997	1995	1996	1997	1995	1996	1997	1995	1996	1997
Coyote	2,000	2,200	1,900	16.7	18.3	19.0	9,700	8,500	8,900	28.5	25.8	27.0	1,082	1,097	1,188
Dog	400	800	200	3.3	6.7	2.0	400	1,000	400	1.2	3.0	1.2	1,000 Dollars		
Bear	400	700	400	3.3	5.8	4.0	800	800	700	2.4	2.4	2.1	111	154	121
Cougar	600	200	300	5.0	1.7	3.0	700	500	1,100	2.1	1.5	3.3	120	72	154
Fox	100	0	0	0.8	0.0	0.0	500	700	400	1.5	2.1	1.2	56	72	44
Other ^{6/ 7/ 8/} . .	0	0	100	0.0	0.0	1.0	400	200	900	1.2	0.6	2.7	37	21	110
Unknown Predator	100	100	0	0.8	0.8	0.0	100	100	300	0.3	0.3	0.9	19	21	33
TOTAL PREDATORS .	3,600	4,000	2,900	30.0	33.3	29.0	12,600	11,800	12,700	37.1	35.8	38.5	1,499	1,622	1,716
Weather	100	300	200	0.8	2.5	2.0	4,800	4,400	5,200	14.1	13.3	15.8	453	482	594
Disease	1,600	1,700	1,700	13.3	14.2	17.0	5,700	5,700	5,400	16.8	17.3	16.4	675	759	781
Poison	500	500	1,100	4.2	4.2	11.0	800	800	800	2.4	2.4	2.4	120	133	209
Lambing Complications . .	1,900	1,400	1,300	15.8	11.7	13.0	3,100	5,700	4,700	9.1	17.3	14.2	463	728	660
Old Age	1,700	1,900	1,400	14.2	15.8	14.0	--	--	--	--	--	--	157	195	154
Theft	200	600	100	1.7	5.0	1.0	300	200	100	0.9	0.6	0.3	46	82	22
On Back	300	200	100	2.5	1.7	1.0	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	28	21	11
Other ^{9/}	700	100	400	5.8	0.8	4.0	2,000	700	2,000	5.9	2.1	6.1	250	82	264
Unknown Causes ^{10/} . . .	1,400	1,300	800	11.7	10.8	8.0	4,700	3,700	2,100	13.8	11.2	6.4	564	513	319
TOTAL	12,000	12,000	10,000	100.0	100.0	100.0	34,000	33,000	33,000	100.0	100.0	100.0	4,255	4,617	4,730

^{1/} Includes lamb deaths before docking of 17,000 in 1995, 1996 and 1997. ^{2/} Percentages may not add due to rounding. ^{3/} Based on average of beginning year and end of year value of head: 1995 - \$92.50, 1996 - \$102.50, 1997 - \$110. ^{4/} Rounded to nearest 1,000 dollars. ^{5/} Dollar values were rounded to add to total. ^{6/} In 1995 includes bobcats, eagles, etc. ^{7/} In 1996 includes bobcats, eagle, wolves, etc. ^{8/} In 1997 includes bobcats, eagles, wolves, etc. ^{9/} Includes accidents, fire, starvation, dehydration, etc. ^{10/} Exact cause of death unidentifiable. May include some predator loss.